

# NEWS FROM SCDCA

South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs



Brandolyn Thomas Pinkston, Administrator

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### South Carolina Shoppers at Risk for Identity Theft

**Columbia, SC.....** TJX Companies, owner of T.J. Maxx, A.J. Wright, Marshalls and other stores announced last month that it suffered an “unauthorized intrusion” into its computer systems late last year. Since these three stores are prominent in the state, the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) is warning South Carolinians who shop there to be on the alert for fraudulent activity on their bank and credit card statements and credit reports.

“Unfortunately, identity thieves have become very savvy and have been able to circumvent security and infiltrate computer databases of retail outlets,” SCDA Administrator Brandolyn Thomas Pinkston said. “It’s important that consumers be alert and check credit card and bank statements thoroughly along with their credit reports to make sure there are no discrepancies if they shopped at any of these stores.”

Some South Carolinians have already been warned of the TJX security breach by their financial institutions, according to Pinkston, but consumers should not wait for notification. TJX admits that the full extent of the theft and affected customers is not yet known.

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about the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs.

Established by the Consumer Protection code in 1974, The South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs represents the interests of South Carolina Consumers.

Our mission is to protect consumers from inequities in the marketplace through advocacy, mediation, enforcement and education.

For more information, visit [www.sccconsumer.gov](http://www.sccconsumer.gov).

What was initially thought to affect thousands may number in the millions, according to national media reports last week. “Be proactive and take steps to protect yourself now,” Pinkston said.

TJX has established a special helpline for its customers who have questions about the situation: **866-484-6978**. Consumers should be on guard if they shopped at the store from May 2003 through December 2006. More detailed information about the security breach is available at [www.TJX.com](http://www.TJX.com).

**What to do if you suspect your ID has been stolen:**

- Put a Fraud Alert on your credit by calling the three major credit bureaus
  - Equifax 1-800-525-6285
  - Experian 1-888-397-3742
  - TransUnion 1-800-680-7289
- Check bank statements and credit card bills carefully
- Review your credit report annually. Request a free credit report at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or by calling 1-877-322-8228

For more information on Identity Theft or Credit Reports, please contact the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs, 1-800-922-1594, or online at [www.sccconsumer.gov](http://www.sccconsumer.gov).

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